



## DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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**For Immediate Release**

Dec. 18, 2009

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### **DEQ responds to EPA's changes in greenhouse gas regulations**

BATON ROUGE –Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality Secretary Harold Leggett recently sent a letter to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa Jackson addressing concerns about EPA's recent "Endangerment Finding" regarding greenhouse gases.

On Dec. 7, EPA announced it found that current and projected concentrations of the six greenhouse gases – carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons and sulfur hexafluoride – in the atmosphere threaten the public health and welfare of current and future generations, and that the combined emissions of these gases from new motor vehicles and new motor vehicle engines contribute to the greenhouse gas pollution which threatens public health and welfare.

While these findings do not themselves impose any new requirements, they set the stage for regulation of greenhouse gas emissions from stationary sources, such as power plants, refineries, pulp and paper mills, etc. under the Clean Air Act.

DEQ's letter points out flaws and raises questions about EPA's recent announcement. The letter states that the Clean Air Act is not the appropriate tool for regulating greenhouse gases. National regulatory agencies and the public need a cost-benefit analysis before such an important, possibly detrimental, decision can be made. As a co-regulator, DEQ recognizes the need for reduced emissions, and the U.S. Congress is currently considering legislation directly addressing greenhouse gases and global warming. The DEQ supports this route, and not the Clean Air Act, as a more appropriate mechanism to address this issue. The DEQ believes EPA has not adequately evaluated the impact of its recent greenhouse gas proposed rules on the states and permitting authorities.

The DEQ strongly believes that finding carbon dioxide and the other five greenhouse gases as "an endangerment" will increase regulatory programs and create an undue burden on industries, such as the oil and gas industry. This will have a substantial economic impact upon Louisiana and across the nation as costs for energy rise. There are also the questions regarding an uneven playing field for states that support the nations' energy and oil use.

While the protection of human health and the environment is of utmost importance, it is imperative that economic factors be taken into consideration. Prior to promulgation of any rule or final policy action that could result in the regulation of greenhouse gas emissions at stationary sources, EPA should quantify the costs to federal, state, and local governments and the regulated community, assess the benefits associated with reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and show that the benefits of such regulations outweigh its costs.

To view DEQ's response, as well as letters to Jackson from Texas and South Carolina, please go to:  
[www.deq.louisiana.gov](http://www.deq.louisiana.gov).